

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 NEA-10 /066 W

-----031102Z 106613 /12

R 030803Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9197

INFO CINCPAC

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CINCPAC FPR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, RP, XF

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT MARCOS EXPLAINS MINDANAO IMPASSE AND VOWS
TO ATTEMPT MAINTAIN CEASEFIRE

REF: MANILA 6575

SUMMARY: PRESIDENT MARCOS TOLD MEMBERS OF LEGISLATIVE ADVISORY COUNCIL MAY 3 THAT IMPASSE IN MANDANAO IS DUE TO UNREASONABLE DEMANDS OF MNLF AND ISLAMIC CONFERENCE. PRESIDENT DEFENDED APRIL 17 REFERENDUM AS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PREVIOUS AGREEMENTS AND SAID THAT DESPITE MNLF THREATS, GOP WOULD STRIVE TO KEEP CEASEFIRE IN SOUTH. PRESIDENT STILL ATTEMPTING TO MAINTAIN POSTURE OF GRATITUDE TO LIBYANS, BUT OBVIOUSLY HAVING DIFFICULT TIME SQUARING THIS WITH LIBYAN ROLE AS QUADRIPARTITE COMMISSION MEMBER IN MOST RECENT NEGOTIATIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. PRESIDENT MARCOS ADDRESSED HASTILY CONVENED SPECIAL SESSION OF LEGISLATIVE ADVISORY COUNCIL (BATASAN BAYAN) MAY 3 TO EXPLAIN BREAKDOWN OF MINDANAO NEGOTIATIONS. MARCOS CLAIMED THAT GOP HAD WELCOMED MNLF-QUADRIPARTITE COMMISSION OF ISLAMIC
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CONFERENCE DELEGATION TO DISCUSS "DETAILS" OF SETTLEMENT CONTAINED IN DECEMBER 23 TRIPOLI AGREEMENT AND MARCH 18-19 QADHAFI-MARCOS "FORMULA." HOWEVER, IN MIDDLE OF TOKYO VISIT, MARCOS LEARNED THAT MNLF HAD "INTERPOSED NEW DEMANDS." PRESIDENT SAID THAT ON APRIL 27 HE AND MRS. MARCOS AGAIN APPEALED TO QADHAFI TO INSTRUCT HIS DELEGATES TO AWAIT MARCOS' RETURN TO MANILA FROM JAPAN. HOWEVER,

MARCOS SAID THAT EVEN BEFORE HIS RETURN ON APRIL 29 IT HAD BECOME OBVIOUS THAT "THE UNALTERABLE POSITION OF THE MNLF" WAS REFLECTED ALSO BY ISLAMIC CONFERENCE DELEGATION HEADED BY SECGEN AMADOU KARIM GAYE OF SENEGAL, AND THAT "THEY HAD REJECTED OUR COMPROMISE PROPOSALS."

2. PRESIDENT DETAILED MNLF DEMANDS WHICH HE TERMED "OPENLY CONTEMPTUOUS" OF PHILIPPINE CONSTITUTION AND IN VIOLATION OF EARLIER AGREEMENTS, AS FOLLOWS:

A) MNLF REJECTED APRIL 17 REFERENDUM DESPITE "UNANIMOUS" VIEW OF DIPLOMATIC AND PRESS OBSERVERS THAT IT WAS FREE, OPEN, ORDERLY, AND TRUE EXPRESSION OF PEOPLES' WILL, WITHOUT PRESENCE OF ARMED FORCES NEAR POLLS. PRESIDENT FURTHER ASSERTED THAT NEITHER MNLF NOR ISLAMIC CONFERENCE HAD VOICED OBJECTIONS TO REFERENDUM BEFORE APRIL 13-14, BY WHICH TIME IT WAS TOO LATE TO CANCEL.

B) MNLF DID NOT RECOGNIZE GOP'S EFFORT TO FORM A PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT, BUT INSTEAD DEMANDED ONE TOTALLY DOMINATED BY ITS OWN REPRESENTATIVES. MNLF ALSO REFUSED TO COUNTENANCE ELECTIONS FOR REGIONAL ASSEMBLY BEFORE SIX-YEAR TRANSITION PERIOD.

C) MNLF DEMANDED UNITARY AUTONOMOUS REGION WITH ONE ASSEMBLY AND ONE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL, IGNORING CONTRARY VIEWS OF PEOPLE AS EXPRESSED IN REFERENDUM. MNLF DEMANDED RELIGIOUS (ISLAMIC) QUALIFICATION FOR REPRESENTATIVES FROM MUSLIM-DOMINATED PROVINCES, IN VIOLATION OF PHILIPPINE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CONSTITUTION

D) MNLF DEMANDED SEPARATE MILITARY FORCES, ARMED, TRAINED AND EQUIPPED BY GOP BUT NOT PART OF PHILIPPINE ARMED FORCES, NUMBERING 15,000 MEN, TO BE COMMANDED BY MAJOR GENERAL UNDER CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF MNLF. MARCOS SAID THAT ISLAMIC COMMITTEE HAD ACKNOWLEDGED POSSIBILITY THAT THIS FORCE MIGHT BE UNDER THE PRESIDENT OF THE PHILIPPINES, BUT THIS WAS REJECTED BY MNLF.

E) MNLF DEMANDED SEPARATE FINANCE AND AUDITING SYSTEM FOR AUTONOMOUS REGION.

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

3. PRESIDENT SAID GOP HAD "BENT OVER BACKWARDS" TO ACCOMMODATE MNLF AND IC, BUT LATEST DEMANDS "VIOLATE EVERY PRINCIPLE WE HAVE STOOD FOR AS A NATION... TO GRANT THEM IS TO DIVIDE, RATHER THAN UNIFY THE REPUBLIC."

4. IN CONCLUSION PRESIDENT EMPHASIZED THAT CEASEFIRE "WAS MOST CONCRETE RESULT" OF NEGOTIATIONS. HE CLAIMED THAT MNLF ALLEGATIONS THAT GOP HAD USED PERIOD OF PEACE TO BUILD UP FORCES IN SOUTH WAS "A BLATANT AND VERY OBVIOUS FALSEHOOD." MARCOS ASSERTED THAT TOTAL STRENGTH OF ARMED FORCES IN SOUTH HAS BEEN REDUCED SINCE DECEMBER 24. MARCOS SAID IT WOULD BE "A DISASTER TO ABANDON POLICY OF RECONCILIATION" AND PLEDGED FURTHER EFFORT TO MAINTAIN AND STRENGTHEN PEACE. FOLLOWING PRESIDENT'S REMARKS, VARIOUS MUSLIM GOVERNORS AND MEMBERS OF NEGOTIATING PANE TOOK THE FLOOR IN FULSOME SUPPORT OF PRESIDENT'S POLICIES.

5. COMMENT: MARCOS' VERSION OF NEGOTIATIONS COVERED MUCH THE SAME GROUND AS ROMULO STATEMENT OF MAY 1 AND WAS PREDICTABLY ONE-SIDED. PRESIDENT'S EFFORT TO MAINTAIN THAT APRIL 17 REFERENDUM WAS IN ACCORDANCE WITH PREVIOUS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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AGREEMENTS WILL NOT CONVINCE ANYONE WHO HAS READ PERTINENT TEXTS. FOR WHAT IT MAY BE WORTH, HE APPEARED TO BE BACKING AWAY FROM LAVISH PRAISE OF LIBYANS WHICH HAS BEEN HALLMARK OF RECENT GOP COMMENTARY ON MINDANAO, BUT IS CLEARLY HARD TO MAINTAIN IN VIEW OF RECENT ACTION OF ISLAMIC CONFERENCE DELEGATION, INCLUDING LIBYAN FORNSEC ALI TURAYKI. MINDANAO MILITARY COMMANDER (ADMIRAL ESPALDON)

HAS REPEATED PRESIDENT'S ASSERTION THAT CEASEFIRE REMAINS
IN EFFECT, AT SAME TIME NOTING THAT AFP REMAINS ON "RED
ALERT" IN SOUTH.
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Message Attributes

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